AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

Claims 1- 36. (Canceled)

37   (New)   An automated computer-implemented method of determining a geographic location of an Internet user, comprising:

receiving at least one of an IP address, host name or domain name associated with the Internet user, wherein the IP address, host name or domain name are associated with a target host;

obtaining a route through the Internet to the target host, the route containing intermediate hosts;

determining strings of characters associated with geographic naming conventions for at least some of the intermediate hosts contained in the route;

determining geographic locations associated with at least some of the intermediate hosts by use of a database correlating the strings of characters to geographic locations; and

automatically determining the geographic location of the Internet user by analysis of the route and the geographic locations of at least some of the intermediate hosts.

38.   (New) The method of claim 37, further comprising deriving the geographic location for an unknown intermediate host within the route that does not have an associated string of characters associated with a geographic naming convention by determining the geographic location of an entity that owns the unknown intermediate host.

39.   (New) The method of claim 37, further comprising storing the geographic location of the Internet user in a database along with the geographic locations of a plurality of other Internet users.

40.   (New) The method of claim 37, further comprising determining a geographic address of an entity that owns the IP address, host name or domain name.

41.   (New) The method of claim 37, wherein the receiving one of the IP address, host name or the domain name comprises receiving both the IP address and the domain name and the method further comprises verifying that the IP address corresponds to the host name or the domain name.

42.   (New) The method of claim 37, wherein the obtaining of the route through the Internet comprises performing a traceroute.

43. (New) The method of claim 37, further comprising assigning a confidence level to the geographic location of the Internet user.

44. (New) The method of claim 37, wherein automatically determining the geographic location of the Internet user comprises automatically determining a city where the Internet user is located.

45. (New) The method of claim 37, wherein automatically determining the geographic location of the Internet user comprises automatically determining a region within a country where the Internet user is located.

46. (New) The method of claim 37, wherein receiving comprises receiving a plurality of IP addresses, host names or domain names associated with a plurality of Internet users, and wherein automatically determining comprises automatically determining geographic locations of the plurality of Internet users.

47. (New) The method of claim 37, further comprising receiving queries for the geographic location of the Internet user and returning the geographic location.

48. (New) A computer-implemented method of determining a geographic location of a target host, comprising:

receiving at least one of an IP address, host name or domain name associated with the target host;

obtaining a route through the Internet to the target host, the route containing at least one intermediate host having an intermediate host name;

determining a string of characters associated with a geographic naming convention in the intermediate host name;

determining a geographic location of the intermediate host based at least in part on the string of characters; and

automatically determining the geographic location of the target host at least in part by analysis of the route and the geographic location of the intermediate host.

49. (New) The method of claim 48, further comprising storing the geographic location of the target host in a database along with the geographic locations of a plurality of other target hosts.

50. (New) The method of claim 48, wherein the target host is associated with at least one Internet user.

51. (New) The method of claim 48, wherein determining a first geographic location of the intermediate host comprises using a database associating a plurality of strings of characters with geographic locations.

52.   (New) The method of claim 48, wherein receiving comprises receiving a plurality of IP addresses, host names or domain names associated with a plurality of target hosts, and wherein automatically determining comprises automatically determining geographic locations of the plurality of target hosts.

53.   (New) The method of claim 48, wherein the route contains a plurality of intermediate hosts and a geographic location is determined for each intermediate host.

54.   (New) The method of claim 53, wherein automatically determining the geographic location of the target host comprises analysis of the route and the geographic locations of the intermediate hosts.

55.   (New) The method of claim 53, further comprising determining a confidence level associated with the geographic location of the intermediate host.

56.   (New) The method of claim 48, further comprising determining a confidence level associated with the geographic location of the target host.

57.   (New) The method of claim 48, wherein the receiving one of the IP address, host name or the domain name comprises receiving both the IP address and the domain

name and the method further comprises verifying that the IP address corresponds to the host name or the domain name.

58.   (New) The method of claim 48, wherein the obtaining of the route through the Internet comprises performing a traceroute.

59.   (New) The method of claim 48, wherein automatically determining the geographic location of the target host comprises automatically determining a city where the target host is located.

60.   (New) The method of claim 48, wherein automatically determining the geographic location of the target host comprises automatically determining a region within a country where the target host is located.

61.   (New) The method of claim 50, further comprising receiving at least one query for the geographic location of the Internet user and returning the geographic location.